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Governing Board Takes First Steps Towards Creating Brand New TSU

By Ricardo Gonzalez

The Associated Students, Inc. Cookout last month helped spread the word on an expansion of the Titan Student Union. It was also the first step in a lengthy process that the Titan Student Center's Governing Board members and their associates took to decide what the facility's future will be.

"What we're looking for is a full, 360-degree picture of how the program is serving the university today and areas that maybe we could do better in," said Kurt Borsting, director of the TSU.

Aside from the Jan. 25 cookout, several focus groups are being conducted in the TSU to get a broad scope of how well the building is serving the interests of various groups on campus. Though patterns have emerged from early feedback in what is being referred to as the "feasibility study," Borsting emphasized the intention for all students to have a say on the matter.

"This process is to find what the students' voice is," Borsting said. "This whole process is to really find out how we can stay very current and relevant with the type of service students expect."

The Governing Board is looking for an overwhelming breadth of feedback. Over the course of the next few months, wide-scale surveys and studies will be conducted with every facet of the student body and even the larger Fullerton community to ensure an accurate result.

To do this, Cal State Fullerton has brought in Brailsford and Dunlavey, a facility planning and program management company, to find out what Titans are looking for. CSUF's previous collaboration with the firm led to the construction of the Student Recreation Center.

"The process that we employ is really very much focused on what the students are interested in," said Matt Bohannon, program manager at Brailsford and Dunlavey. "Identifying what their needs are so we can empower students to make the decisions for what would be the best route forward for their particular campus."

The TSU was originally built in 1976, and last saw major renovations in 1992 when the population was about 24,000 students. CSUF has since grown to more than 36,000 students, and TSC Governing Board is anxious to find out if the TSU still serves the needs of this inflated population.

“We have a lot to offer, currently,” said Christian Urcia, 25, chair of the Titan Student Center’s Governing Board. “We have the potential to offer a lot more, but for students to really give us that feedback, they need to see what we have to offer right now.”

The feasibility study aims to produce results by the end of the academic school year. However, all parties stressed this is a project for the future generations of Titans—citing the four-year cycle of construction for the SRC as the measuring stick for a future TSU renovation.

“This type of planning really is very important so that we can ensure five, 10, 15 years down the road. We’ve properly developed the program and the infrastructure, the facilities and the spaces, so that we can serve a campus that is expected to be larger,” Borsting said.

With a large-scale survey expected to launch in two weeks and many more studies conducted through March and April, Urcia, Borsting and Bohannon have no preconceived expectations of what the student body at large will have to say regarding expansion of the TSU.

Though Borsting has admitted that already some of the feedback is “a little hard to hear” as the director of the TSU, improving the student experience in the Titan Student Union is what this study is about.

“We want this to be your home away from home,” Borsting said.